

Slide 1: Communicating Information About Overuse to Consumers

John Santa, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Health Ratings Center
Consumer Reports, Yonkers, New York

Slide 2: Consumer Reports in Context

- Consumers choose/purchase services or products in a market setting.
- Market settings are often not a “level playing field.”
- Advertising and promotion are an effective means of providing biased information to consumers, leading to frequent overuse or misuse.
- Consumers need independent, scientific information to make optimal selections.
 - Consumers’ experience
 - Outcomes
 - Cost
- Presentation should focus on consumers.

Slide 3: Consumer Reports Health

- Health a prominent topic since 1936.
- A “franchise” was created in 2007.
 - Health Ratings Center — multidisciplinary team
- The focus is on comparisons.
 - The first release in 2008 focused on the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care data on the chronic care of Medicare-enrolled patients with chronic illnesses in the last 2 years of life and found a significant variation in use of multiple services.

Slide 4: Comparisons of Health Services

- The BMJ Group licensed content to Consumer Reports that rated health services for 200 common conditions from 2008 to 2011.
- Their presentation featured rating tiers and symbols used by Consumer Reports.
- Each rating was based on a Cochrane review.
 - Example: Lower back pain interventions
 - Survey results from patients with back pain
 - Strength of the evidence

Slide: 5: Exploratory Literature Review (1 of 2)

- The review focused on the cognitive psychology literature.
- Findings of the review were summarized in the report:
Sprenger A, Kane J, Schuler-Adair E. Health Actions Not To Do: Lessons for Consumer Decision-Making. Literature Review and White Paper (Prepared by the Consumer Reports Health Ratings Center–Consumers Union under Contract No. B054.FP1). Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; February 2010. AHRQ Publication No. TK.

Slide 6: Exploratory Literature Review (2 of 2)

The review showed that:

- People tend to continue acting in ways they have acted in the past.
- Focusing people’s attention on different aspects of the same information can alter people’s ultimate decisions.
- People tend to choose positively described options when they perceive options as safe, and people tend to choose negatively described options when they perceive options as risky.
- People process information both analytically and experientially, and as such, the emotional content of messages must be considered.
- Decision aids can help.

Slide 7: Comparison of Heart Disease Screening Tests (1 of 2)

- Began with the grades used by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.
- Built ratings of common coronary or vascular disease screening tests.
- Added new evidence, frequency/burden of disease, cost, and application to other diseases.
- Presented the ratings in five tiers, using Consumer Reports symbols.
- Found that:
 - Highly rated tests underused
 - Poorly rated tests overused

Slide 8: Comparison of Heart Disease Screening Tests (2 of 2)

Image of *Consumer Reports* Heart/Vascular Prevention Test Ratings:
Asymptomatic Men, 45-54 Years of Age

Slide 9: Cardiovascular Screening Tests in Healthy People 40 to 60 Years of Age (1 of 2)

- 44 percent of Consumer Reports subscribers had had a low-rated cardiovascular screening test.
- The most common screening test was an electrocardiogram, followed by a stress test and ultrasound.
- These people significantly overestimated their risk for cardiovascular disease.
- High levels of promotion focused especially on imaging.

Slide 10: Cardiovascular Screening Tests in Healthy People 40 to 60 Years of Age (2 of 2)

- 11 percent had talked with their physician about followup if the screening test gave an abnormal result.
- 9 percent had discussed the accuracy of the test.
- 4 percent knew about the potential complications from the test.
- 1 percent had discussed with their physician whether or not the test saved lives.

Slide 11: Choosing Wisely® Campaign (1 of 3)

- An initiative of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation designed to:
 - Help physicians and patients engage in conversations about the overuse of tests and procedures
 - Support physician efforts to help patients make smart and effective care choices

Slide 12: Choosing Wisely® Campaign (2 of 3)

The Campaign has the following components:

- Messengers and Collaborators
 - 28 specialty societies, Consumer Reports, multiple consumer organizations—and growing
- Communicate Messages
 - Specialty societies, Consumer Reports, and the ABIM Foundation
- Activate
 - Concrete action around unnecessary tests and procedures

Slide 13: Choosing Wisely® Campaign (3 of 3)

- The challenges
 - One third of all physicians acquiesce to patient requests for tests and procedures — even when they know they are not necessary.
 - Physician decisions account for 80 percent of all health care expenditures.

Slide 14: Health Care Reform — The “Top Five” List

“A Top 5 list also has the advantage that if we restrict ourselves to the most egregious causes of waste, we can demonstrate to a skeptical public that we are genuinely protecting patients’ interests and not simply ‘rationing’ health care, regardless of the benefit, for cost-cutting purposes.”

— Howard Brody, M.D., Ph.D.

Slide 15: The “Top Five Lists”

- With grant funding by the ABIM Foundation, the National Physicians Alliance piloted the concept through its Good Stewardship Working Group.
- The Working Group developed lists of top-five activities in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics where the quality of care could be improved.
- The final lists reflected 12 unique activities that could improve clinical care.
- The results were published in the Archives of Internal Medicine.
- Subsequent research published in the Archives of Internal Medicine found a cost savings of more than \$5 billion could be realized if the recommendations of the Working Group were put in to practice.

Slide 16: Methods of the National Physicians Alliance

- Working groups of National Physicians Alliance members in each of three primary care specialties (internal medicine, family medicine, and pediatrics) agreed that an ideal activity would be one that was common in primary care practice, that was strongly supported by the evidence, and that would lead to significant health benefits and reduce risks, harms, and costs.
- A modification of nominal group process was used to generate a preliminary list of activities.
- A first round of field testing was conducted with 83 primary care physicians and a second round of field testing with an additional 172 physicians.

Slide 17: Choosing Wisely® Partners

Societies Released Lists in April 2012

- American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American College of Cardiology
- American College of Physicians
- American College of Radiology
- American Gastroenterological Association
- American Society of Nephrology
- American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
- American Society of Clinical Oncology

Consumer Groups Through Partnership With Consumer Reports

- AARP
- Alliance Health Networks
- Leapfrog Group
- Midwest Business Group on Health
- Minnesota Health Action Network
- National Business Coalition on Health
- National Business Group on Health
- National Center for Farmworker Health
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- National Partnership for Women & Families
- Pacific Business Group on Health
- SEIU
- Union Plus
- Wikipedia

Societies Releasing Lists in Fall 2012

- American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
- American Academy of Neurology
- American Academy of Ophthalmology
- American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- American College of Rheumatology
- American Geriatrics Society
- American Society for Clinical Pathology
- American Society of Echocardiography
- Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography
- Society of Hospital Medicine
- Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging

Source: Eisenberg Center Conference Series 2012: Supporting Informed and Shared Decision Making When Clinical Evidence and Conventional Wisdom Collide. Effective Health Care Program Web site. (<http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov>)

- Society of Thoracic Surgeons
- Society of Vascular Medicine

Societies Releasing Lists in 2013

- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
- American College of Surgeons
- American Headache Society

Slide 18: How the “Top Five” Lists Were Created

- As partners, all professional societies were free to determine the process for creating their lists.
- Each item was within the purview and control of the specialty represented.
- The procedures selected should be used frequently and/or carry a significant cost.
- There should be generally accepted evidence to support each recommendation.
- The process should be thoroughly documented and publicly available upon request.
- Harmonization is not required but desirable.

Slide 19: The Role of Consumer Reports

- Consumer Reports is a partner in Choosing Wisely® and will support the effort by:
 - Creating patient-friendly materials based on the recommendations of each society
 - Engaging a coalition of consumer communication partners to disseminate content and messages about the appropriate use of the medical procedures to the communities they serve

Slide 20: Robust Topic Themes

- Screening tests
 - Electrocardiography
 - Exercise test
 - Pap smear
 - Bone density
 - Heart imaging
 - Colon cancer
- Diagnosis of common symptoms
 - Low back pain
 - Headache
 - Allergy

- Fainting
- Preoperative evaluations
 - Chest x-ray
 - Heart imaging
- Common treatments
 - Antibiotics
 - Heartburn medications
 - Anti-inflammatory drugs
- Disease approach
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney failure/dialysis

Slide 21: Choosing Wisely® Consumer Content

- Two-page consumer-friendly translations of consumer-oriented topics, such as:
 - Electrocardiograms and exercise stress tests
 - Treating heartburn and gastroesophageal reflux disease
 - Treating sinusitis
- Plain-language versions of selected topics
- Longer “stories” about more complex topics: chronic renal failure/dialysis, cancer
- Spanish translations
- Videos of selected topics

Slide 22: Longer Versions of Consumer Content

- Multiple topics across a field
- Complex topics
- Cancer (American Society of Clinical Oncology): “Even in cancer, more may not be better.”
- Chronic renal failure (American Society of Nephrology): “Even in chronic renal disease, more treatment may not be best solution.”

Slide 23: Our Challenge

- Consumers are wary of overuse messages.
- Trust is key.
 - Physicians are highly trusted.
 - Consumer organizations are highly trusted.
- The best approach is to present a message as part of culture change, not as a specific strategy.
 - Talk with your doctor.

Slide 24: Our Approach

- Cobrand information to build trust.
- Develop content with professional societies using a mutual consent process.
- Provide alternatives to the overused service/product.
- Develop plain-language versions.
- Disseminate via a large consumer network.

Slide 25: Choosing Wisely® Consumer Groups

Consumer Reports will be facilitating consumer communications with the following groups (more coming):

- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
- Alliance Health
- Midwest Business Group on Health
- National Business Coalition on Health
- National Business Group on Health
- National Center for Farmworker Health
- National Partnership for Women and Families
- Pacific Business Group on Health
- Leapfrog Group
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
- The Wikipedia Community (through a dedicated Wikipedian-in-Residence)

Slide 26: The Consumer Communications Commitment

- Each organization commits to reach 1 million or more consumers.
- Each organization chooses timing, topics, audience, and surrounding content.
- Example: An article on retooling Medicare, published in the June 2012 issue of the AARP Bulletin, focused on seven Choosing Wisely® topics and reached 28 million subscribers.

Slide 27: Lessons on Plain Language

Based on one-on-one interviews conducted by Health Research for Action at the University of California, Berkeley:

- Trust is important, but brands are not recognizable in many cases.
- Advice on what to do is the most popular.
- Self-care, nondrug, and nondoctor advice is the most popular.
- Text can be intimidating; bullets are more effective.
- Pictures are important to set the tone, for consistency, and for conveying the message.
- Although health information is considered credible, the preference is to talk with a doctor and do what he or she says.

Source: Eisenberg Center Conference Series 2012: Supporting Informed and Shared Decision Making When Clinical Evidence and Conventional Wisdom Collide. Effective Health Care Program Web site. (<http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov>)

- Brand names are much more recognizable; generic names are confusing.
- Pap smear expectations are well established; new suggestions are confusing.
- An advice box is the most popular.

Slide 28: Provider Focus Group

The clinical staff of the National Center for Farmworker Health participated in a focus group and identified the following issues:

- Information is recognizable, credible, and valuable.
 - Physician brands are a challenge.
- Text is difficult to understand for the average patient, whether in English or Spanish.
- Some images are hard for patients to identify with.
- Images are helpful in communicating overuse, even to low-income patients.

Slide 29: Identified Issues

From Professional Societies

- Harmonization
- Safety
- Use of brand names
- Cost estimates

From Consumers

- Safety
- Plain language
- Knowing who the professional societies are
- Measurement
- Cost

Slide 30: Safety

- Safety is the most powerful issue that attracts consumers.
- What does safety include?
 - Direct (radiation, adverse drug effects)
 - Indirect (false-positive results, labeling)
- An important problem is how to communicate risk accurately.
- Imaging is likely the most affected.

Slide 31: Dissemination Efforts

- Employers
 - National Business Group on Health (NBGH) — integration into evidence efforts
 - Coalitions — tool kit, conferences, payers
- Wikipedia
 - Wikipedian-in-Residence
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
 - Cover in the AARP Bulletin
- Labor
- Integrated Communications
 - Consumer Reports magazine, ConsumerReports.org, Consumer Reports TV, Consumer Reports on Health newsletter, Consumer Reports health partner Web portal, PDF reports, Spanish reports, blogs, e-newsletters, Webinars, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube

Slide 32: Practitioners

- Awareness of Choosing Wisely® at the group level is modest.
- 3 out of 10 groups are willing/able to review documents with consumer advisors (American Medical Group Association).
- 10 percent of 30 practicing physicians in one market were aware of Choosing Wisely®.
- There is a lot of competition for attention.

Slide 33: Evaluation

- Evaluation is difficult.
- All topics include some appropriate use.
- Multiple efforts are underway to reduce overuse.
- The plan is to undertake descriptive evaluations for now.

Slide 34: Next

- Professional societies will release more Top 5 lists in late 2012. The next release will be in February 2013.
- Multiple dissemination efforts are underway.
- There is sustained media interest.
- Consumer concern about costs is growing.
- There are local and regional implementation efforts.
 - Consumer led
 - Physician led